DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 047 584 FL 002 122

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TITLE Do's and Don't's of Audio-Lingual Teaching.
INSTITUTION Xerox Corp., Rochester, N.Y.
PUB DATE 66
NOTE 22p.

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS *Audiolingual Methods, Audiolingual Skills, Audiovisual Instruction, Conversational Language Courses, Instructional Program Divisions, *Language Instruction, Language Skills, *Modern Languages, Pattern Drills (Language), Patterned Responses, Second Language Learning, Teaching Guides, *Teaching Methods, Teaching Models, *Teaching Techniques, Testing, Writing

ABSTRACT

Some 115 comments on improving the teaching of foreign languages are organized in a broad variety of categories. They include: (1) class preparation, (2) student-teacher contact, (3) acoustic problems, (4) the role of English, (5) the use of the blackboard, (6) the role of the textbook, (7) grammar, (8) students and their questions, (9) teaching pronunciation, (10) the role of the dialogue, (11) calling on students, (12) student errors, (13) drilling procedure, (14) drill tempo and adaptations, (15) choral/individual drills, (16) gestures, (17) conversation, (18) written word, and (19) testing. Periodic reference to this list is suggested as a means by which the teacher may evaluate and improve his own classroom procedures. (RL)

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Do's and Don't's of Audio-Lingual Teaching

ED047584

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FL002 172

The following *Do's and Don't's of Audio-Lingual Teaching* represent an attempt to organize into a coherent program of instruction a great variety of notions and comments about how foreign languages might be more effectively taught. The author does not intend that each of these items be necessarily considered an original observation on his part: Several years' involvement in the supervision and coordination of foreign-language classes have given him the opportunity of not only visiting countless classes at many levels but also discussing methodology with many of his colleagues. Thus, this work is in part a compilation. The author does subscribe, however, to each of the observations and feels that they have proved important factors in successful teaching in the classroom. Periodic reference to this list will hopefully provide the teacher with a measure against which his own classroom procedures can constantly be evaluated and perhaps improved. To facilitate the use of this manual, the items have been categorized by topic.

The author wishes to thank his colleagues, Professors Francis Gravit, Frank Banta, and Ray Moody and Mr. Lewis Bastian of Indiana University, and Professor Russell Weingartner of Northwestern University for their contributions and suggestions. To Professor Henry H. H. Remak of Indiana University he is particularly indebted for meticulous and invaluable editorial advice.

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Class Preparation

1. Be sure you understand and are prepared to achieve the objectives of each lesson. These objectives are never simply to cover or "get through" a given number of drills or exercises. If we think of language learning as an observable improvement in linguistic behavior, we should then formulate our objectives in terms of the specific behavioral changes we want to accomplish in each unit of work. What should the student be able to *do* by the end of a lesson that he was not able to do before?

2. Memorize the outline of the lesson plan – that is, the sequence of drills and exercises to be covered in class. It will make for smooth transitions and save valuable time.

3. It is imperative that you know your material well. This entails more than merely looking over the lesson. Be sure you grasp the principles underlying each drill so that you can expand them, if necessary, with additional items. Make an effort to memorize material, such as dialogue, which you expect the students to memorize. You can do this with surprisingly little effort, and the students will be impressed and do their share better. Furthermore, you will be less dependent upon the textbook and thus be able to give more attention to the class.

4. Prepare so that you are not constantly referring to the textbook in class. When working with reading materials or controlled conversations, prepare index cards with key words and phrases as cues for the direction the exercise is to take.

5. When preparing your grammatical explanations, try to anticipate the type of questions the class may ask; then construct the explanation to obviate such questions.

6. Provide yourself with a good sampling of illustrations in addition to those in the textbook when preparing to give grammatical explanations. Failure to have the right example at the right moment can be an embarrassing and frustrating experience for the teacher, and can weaken considerably a good explanation. On the other hand, an appropriate example at the proper moment is often decisive in driving home a point.

Student-Teacher Contact

7. Whenever possible, arrange the students' seats in a semicircle around the area from which you will direct the class. This will enable you to gain maximum proximity to each student without excessive movement or loss of time. The students will also be better able to see and hear each other.

8. The instructor who stands and moves about slowly while teaching does more effective audio-lingual work than the instructor who remains seated. Not only does he lend his own physical activity to that of his students, but also he can see and hear the class better and be seen and heard better by them. He is also more effective in correcting errors and working for near-perfect responses.

9. Always keep the students as close to you as possible. This principle runs contrary to the natural tendency among students to gravitate toward the back of the room. Impress upon your students the great advantage of being able to see your lips and gestures and hear distinctly each sound.

10. Try to keep most of the students before you at all times. This procedure commands their attention more readily and permits you to have better control over them. This principle should be kept in mind especially when you are drilling students individually. Avoid getting off in a corner with your back to the group. If you have to write more than a few words on the blackboard, turn around frequently.

11. An interesting, effective class is characterized by the active participation and constant attention of all of the students. When you notice that some students are not "with you," it may be time to make an appraisal of yourself as a teacher. An accomplished instructor commands respect and cooperation without exhortations.

Acoustic Problems

12. Increase both the volume and the resonance of your voice. This may mean lowering the pitch. Be sure to modulate your voice to avoid a constant, monotonous pitch. There is a high correlation between an instructor's weak voice and weak vocal participation of the class.

13. Silence in a language class is a distracting, negative factor in learning and is your mortal enemy.

Students tend to be anesthetized by frequent interruptions of silence, with the result that participation becomes sluggish and group rapport flags.

14. Demand that each student speak up loud and clear when you are drilling him. Even though you may move in close to him and be able to hear him very well, it is important that the entire group hear him well.

The Role of English

15. The students already know English and do not need to practice it; they do need, on the other hand, as much practice with the foreign language as possible. The degree to which your students learn to react to the foreign language is in direct proportion to the amount of opportunity you have given them in class to perform in it.

16. The role of English in the classroom should be limited to areas where the use of the foreign language is ineffectual or uneconomical – that is, the exposition of grammar and the explanation of the nature of the drills to be done. At all other times, the foreign language should be used exclusively.

The Role of the Textbook

17. The role of the textbook is to provide the students with authentic, representative samples of the foreign language in the form of dialogue and pattern drills which, after being introduced and drilled in class, can be re-drilled at home. It should also function as a reference grammar and give whatever cultural orientation is needed.

18. As a rule, all textbooks should be closed in class. The students should be watching and listening attentively to their instructor; if they are looking at their books, their attention is divided. Moreover, the presence of an open book provides the lazy student with a crutch to compensate for inadequate class preparation and spares him the painful, constant eye-to-eye confrontation with his instructor.

19. If the drills are so constructed that the students must be able to see them to respond and yet are deemed valuable by the instructor (as may be the case with pattern translation drills), then textbooks must naturally be open. Many such drills, however, can be altered effectively so that the student is not

dependent upon the visual representation. Whenever possible, these drills should be converted by the instructor.

20. The aim of an oral approach to language teaching is the understanding of and active response to an oral stimulus. Reading is usually secondary: the student learns to read only what he already understands and can say. The presence of an open book before the student works against this important principle.

21. Spelling is a social convention and is an imperfect visual representation of the sounds of a language. The foreign language class should master the sounds of the foreign language, with spelling assuming a subordinate role: the student should associate letters with sounds, *not* sounds with letters. If the student's attention is continually drawn to the written language, he will hear what he sees (usually letters whose value he knows in English), cultivate spelling pronunciation, and not learn to speak the foreign language.

The Use of the Blackboard

22. The principal function of the blackboard is to enable the instructor to diagram visually important grammatical relationships; as such it is an invaluable tool. The students should not be sent to the blackboard to write out sentences or exercises. Written work prepared at home can be reviewed or corrected orally in class from the students' seats. Occasionally written work can be picked up by the teacher without previous warning.

23. Do not let your class become dependent upon the blackboard for the success of pattern drills. Occasionally visual cues are valuable aids to drilling, particularly following grammatical explanations with new patterns which have not been drilled before. Frequent use of the blackboard, however, may mean the drills are too complicated and must be simplified or they have not been effectively anticipated with drills gradually increasing in complexity.

24. Make sure that the entire class understands clearly what the assignment is for the following day. This can be done by giving the class a stenciled syllabus of assignments for an extended period of

time (week, month, or term). If you prefer to give the assignments daily, make use of a side blackboard or some place where the students can always expect to find your instructions. Do not hurriedly give assignments orally after the dismissal bell has rung.

25. Illustrative material to be used in grammatical explanations can be put on the blackboard off to the side before the class begins, providing easy and quick reference when the time comes to make use of them.

Grammar

26. The question of whether grammatical concepts should be introduced inductively or deductively is not as easy to resolve as many methodologists suppose. In favor of an inductive approach are the principles that the student learns best what he has been able to discover for himself and that the student will profit more from a formal analysis of grammar if he is able to confirm from his own experience in the foreign language the generalizations of the grammatical statement. On the other hand, there is evidence that intensive pattern drilling is much more meaningful to the student, particularly the older student, if he is first explicitly told what he is supposed to be doing and how the pattern functions. A reasonable solution to this dilemma would seem to lie in an accommodation of both approaches to the teaching program.

27. It is important that grammatical explanations be as brief as is consistent with precision and clarity. Such explanations should not be seen as an end in themselves but serve merely to enable the student to perform the drills with understanding. The importance as well as the limitations of this function should be remembered.

28. Most grammatical explanations, if presented clearly and succinctly, will take only two or three minutes. The more difficult ones—for example, those embracing new concepts—may take as long as ten minutes.

29. Grammatical explanations should be in English, not in the foreign language. Their function is to give the students needed insight into the structures they are drilling. Grammatical explanations in English should not be confused with the principle that the class should be conducted as much as pos-

sible in the foreign language. To expect students to understand an important explanation in the language they are trying to learn is unrealistic.

30. The fact that grammar is a description of how native speakers at a certain level behave linguistically will be novel to most students; it may even be met with opposition. The instructor can do a great deal to correct erroneous concepts regarding usage by explaining grammar in terms of what "is done" at certain social levels and in certain regions.

31. It is important to tell the student only what he needs to know in order to handle the pattern being drilled. A detailed, comprehensive explanation of the whole system usually serves no purpose. Avoid such explanations and keep the objectives of the lesson in mind.

32. Meet squarely the challenge of student or colleague who complains that the audio-lingual method somehow "ignores grammar" or fails to stimulate the student intellectually. Such critics confuse this approach with the "direct method" in which the students are left alone with a native speaker and by random, hit-and-miss generalizations eventually learn to express themselves in the language with varying degrees of facility. In an audio-lingual class, on the other hand, the students are made conscious of linguistic signals and relationships with the aim of performing in the language. Such insight into the structure of the language can often be intellectually challenging to the student, but it is never an end in itself.

33. There is a difference between acquiring a command of the grammar or structure of a language and mastering its vocabulary. The student obviously begins to absorb vocabulary from the beginning, but there is a point, ignored by many, at which this seriously interferes with the real problem of mastering structure. One cannot learn a language from a dictionary, and the beginning student cannot learn to speak a foreign language by preoccupying himself principally with the lexicon of the language.

Students and Their Questions

34. Irrespective of the nature of the classwork for a given day, there should be few, if any, questions from the students, and the instructor should not

encourage questions; this does *not* mean, however, he should discourage them. Persistent, reasonable questions mean that the instructor is not doing well what he is doing. The instructor must learn to anticipate the problems the class will encounter, and then meet them squarely by thorough preparation and clear presentation so everything will be well understood.

35. Drill should *never* be interrupted to answer questions. The student should understand clearly what he is doing, either because he was given explicit instructions before starting or because the exercise is so structured that he simply cannot go astray.

36. Do not permit the usual questions about *why* patterns or lexical items in the foreign language do not correspond to English ones. Whatever historical explanations you might give are of limited value as an aid to learning to perform in the language, and they take up valuable time. They can be justified, however, as occasional cultural observations.

37. When a question is permitted, do not take class time for an answer which is not of interest or value to the entire group. The class time belongs to the group as a unit and should not be used for individual remedial instruction. It is best to postpone such questions until class is over.

38. If the answer to a question is "yes" or "no," it is sometimes wiser simply to give the answer. This common-sense solution saves time and trouble.

39. In general, there will be amazingly few questions in a class which is carefully prepared and executed and which moves at a good pace. It is not that the students are intimidated or frightened into not asking questions, but that they simply have no need to ask questions.

40. Be in class a little ahead of time to take care of questions and matters which do not concern the entire group. Such clerical duties as taking attendance and returning papers can also be done either before or after class.

Teaching Pronunciation

41. Near-native pronunciation must be the goal every day of the semester, starting with the first class meeting. Accurate pronunciation is attained only

through constant hard work carefully guided toward the formation of correct habits.

42. The quality of the student's command of the foreign sound system is in direct proportion to the time and effort which the instructor dedicates to pronunciation correction and drill in class. The instructor's standards go far in determining how well his class will speak.

43. Do not let mispronunciations go uncorrected. If you are rigorous, you will get good results. If a student has persistent difficulty, have a conference with him. He may have defective hearing or vision or some other problem of which you are unaware.

44. Pronunciation is an integral part of a language class and should not be considered as a luxury which can be dropped from the program or de-emphasized. As long as the language is drilled aloud, pronunciation remains one of the instructor's primary concerns.

45. If you want your students to understand the foreign language as it is spoken, you must train them from the start to understand and respond to the language spoken at a normal rate of speed. Slowing down the language can result in distortion and thus severely handicap the student by conditioning him to react to a counterfeit form he will not find in the language-speaking community. The student must be prepared to comprehend the language at a much faster rate of speed than he need imitate. Speech should be slowed down only for specific pedagogic reasons – for example, speech correction. This principle is violated equally by native and non-native speakers.

46. Good pronunciation involves not only segmental phonemes (vowels, semivowels, semiconsonants, consonants) but also suprasegmental phonemes (pitch, stress, juncture). These features of intonation differ markedly from one language to another and can be a source of significant misunderstanding.

47. Part of your task in teaching intonation may be to convince the student that the foreign language patterns do not project the image of English intonational patterns.

48. When contrasting the sounds of English with those of the foreign language, focus on their differences rather than their similarities.

49. It is inaccurate to illustrate the foreign sounds with English sounds ("*i* as in *machine*"), folk terminology ("hard" *c* and "soft" *c*), or impressionistic terms ("dark," "heavy," "full"). Describe the sounds rather in terms of their articulatory features – that is, point and manner of articulation and voicing.

50. Keep in mind that most of the pronunciation problems the American student will encounter when learning a foreign language will relate to manner of articulation (stops, fricatives, laterals, nasals).

51. The student must be able to hear the foreign sound before he can be expected to imitate it. At times it may be helpful to describe in clear and accurate phonological terms how the sound differs from English and then model the difference using the minimal contrast technique so the student can clearly focus on the difference.

52. When students have difficulty hearing a new sound, it is often useful to construct drills which contrast the foreign sound with the interfering English sound. When the student is able to imitate and alternate both the native and the foreign sound, he is ready to control them. In Spanish, for instance, the instructor can pronounce the following series of words, alternating English and Spanish sounds for the underlined consonants:

ca<u>d</u>a / ca<u>d</u>a / ca<u>d</u>a / ca<u>d</u>a / ca<u>d</u>a
pa<u>r</u>a / pa<u>r</u>a / pa<u>r</u>a / pa<u>r</u>a / pa<u>r</u>a

53. In teaching pronunciation, it frequently helps to break up what would otherwise be an inviolate unit in order to demonstrate or emphasize the phenomenon that word boundaries are ignored within phonological units. In Spanish, phrases such as "el hombre" and "no es así" can be artificially broken and drilled in the following sequences: /lómbre/, /elómbre/ and /sasí/, /wésasí/, /nwésasí/. Likewise, the interference of the English vowel /ae/ in the pronunciation of the Spanish word "español" can be counteracted by drilling the following sequence: /pán/, /pañól/, /españól/. Liaison can be drilled with the French phrases "chez elle" and "il l'a mis au point" as follows: /zɛl/, /ʃezɛl/ and /pwɛ̃/, /zopwɛ̃/, /mizopwɛ̃/, /ilamizopwɛ̃/.

54. Do not break up a phrase at a point where the student must imitate two variants or allophones of a phoneme until the student has command of both allophones and knows their distribution. For instance, avoid fracturing the Spanish sentence "¿A qué hora salimos de casa?" between the words "salimos" and "de," since the manner of articulation of the /d/ will vary from fricative to stop depending on whether it follows /s/ or silence.

55. Students can frequently learn to pronounce difficult foreign sounds by being "tricked," so to speak, into articulating them. An example of this tactic is the case of the Spanish /r/. Because English has a similar sound intervocally, the following words may each be drilled rapidly in succession in order to approximate the similar sound in Spanish: "meadow" for *mero,* "pot'o [gold]" for *para* and "speedy" for the syllables /piri/ in *espíritu.* Likewise, the English combinations "eat'er," "better-Dodd," and "tutor no," when pronounced quickly in succession, will approximate the Spanish preconsonantal /r/ in the words *carta, verdad* and *turno,* respectively.

56. The blackboard should be used sparingly as an aid to teaching pronunciation. As observed earlier, spelling is a convention which represents imperfectively the sound system of a language and thus frequently interferes with the student's hearing of the foreign language. Many students feel that they cannot pronounce a foreign language unless they see it written; such students should be shown that this dependence on the written form often hinders mastery of the phonology.

57. When problems of pronunciation are being discussed, you should use some sort of phonetic or phonemic transcription as a visual representation of the sounds. This has the advantage of separating clearly pronunciation from the spelling symbols which represent it.

58. You must know your students individually to know to what extent you can persist in correcting their pronunciation in class. No matter how much or little you accomplish with an individual student, make sure that the entire group hears the correct sound from you and practices it.

The Role of the Dialogue

59. Dialogues should be memorized to provide the student with a corpus of the language he can intensively drill in context and from which variations of patterns can be practiced. Memorizing dialogues furthermore enables the student to shift his attention from problems of grammar and vocabulary to such important matters of pronunciation as intonation, which non-dialogue forms of speech slight.

60. Memorization of the dialogue is greatly facilitated when the student is aware of the functional units – for example, subject, verb, direct object, adverb – of an utterance. This is the purpose of introducing the dialogue by means of a breakdown into functional units and of combining pattern drill techniques with the introduction of the dialogue.

61. Dialogues should be introduced to the beginning student by a breakdown process in which the utterances are fragmented into small functional units and drilled by a reverse-buildup process which moves from the end of the utterance to the beginning. The number of syllables per cut will vary according to the nature of the material and the amount of language experience the students have had. For Spanish, the utterance "Los niños ya han vuelto a casa" might be broken down and drilled as follows: "a casa / han vuelto a casa / ya han vuelto a casa / Los niños ya han vuelto a casa." Similarly, the German utterance "Die Kinder sind schon ins Haus gegangen" could be drilled as "gegangen / ins Haus gegangen / sind schon ins Haus gegangen / Die Kinder sind schon ins Haus gegangen," and the French "Les enfants sont déjà revenus à la maison" as "à la maison / revenus à maison / sont déjà revenus à la maison / Les enfants sont déjà revenus à la maison."

62. When drilling dialogues, avoid breaking down utterances beyond their smallest functional units. In the Spanish sentence "El hombre va a salir en vez de trabajar," the units "el hombre" and "en vez de" should not be broken. Similarly, there are only three minimal functional units for drilling purposes in the sentence "Los niños / llegarán / a las ocho." In the following German and French sentences minimal cuts would be "Der Mann / geht aus / anstatt zu / arbeiten" and "Le professeur / reviendra / tout de suite."

63. Dialogues containing utterances of more than twelve syllables will have to be shortened. That this is true can easily be demonstrated by trying out the longer utterances; they are too long for the beginning student's memory span in the foreign language. Frequently this can be corrected by simply deleting superfluous vocabulary. For instance, the Spanish sentence "Quiero que me cambien cien pesetas y este cheque de viajero" can be better drilled "Quiero que me cambien este cheque." Likewise, the German sentence "Können Sie mir einen Reisescheck und diesen Hundert-Mark-Schein wechseln?" can be effectively shortened to "Können Sie mir einen Scheck wechseln?" This principle can be applied to drills as well as dialogues.

64. Both choral drills and individual drills should be used when introducing and drilling dialogues. Books should be closed to prevent the interference of spelling with what the student is hearing.

65. Brief, intensive pattern drilling can be effectively incorporated into an exercise introducing a dialogue. This will facilitate memorization as well as subsequent pattern drills by underscoring the functional units. In the Spanish sentence "Quiero llamar a María," other personal names can be substituted for "María." The same sort of substitution exercise can be utilized with the German sentence "Rufen Sie mich an" and the French "Je voudrais téléphoner à Louise." The class can be trained to move, upon your signal – perhaps a drop in voice pitch – into a pattern drill at any moment during the drilling of a dialogue.

66. Have the students dramatize the dialogues from their seats. To have them do so in front of the class wastes time which could otherwise be spent in valuable drilling. It is also easier for the instructor to call on another student when one of the performers falters.

Calling on Students

67. If the tempo of the drills and the proportion of choral work to individual drill is right, you should be able to call on each student several times each period. In the case of students who cannot keep up with the group, call on them seldom and only when you are confident they will be able to respond correctly.

68. If you know that a student is unprepared for class work or if a student is uncooperative, ignore him for an appropriate length of time (one day, two days, a week or so). Do not take class time to query him or chastise him. Students who make a habit of coming unprepared will quickly find themselves no longer active members of the group.

69. Time spent in active drilling constitutes the most valuable part of the student's learning experience in class. It is inefficient to try to draw out responses from a slow or unprepared student because it wastes time for the entire group.

70. Instruct your students to inform you before class when, for compelling and legitimate reasons, they are not prepared to participate.

71. Calling on students to participate in class drills should not be haphazard. You should call on students when you are reasonably sure they can participate. This principle holds for both the good students and the slow students. The latter frequently need the advantage of intensive choral repetition before participating individually. When drills break down, it is usually because the instructor called on the wrong student at the wrong time.

72. When drilling question-and-answer exercises, do not indicate to whom the question will be directed until *after* it has been formulated: each member of the class should assume that the question is directed to him and, consequently, should prepare to respond. Never systematically move around the room or go down your class roll for individual recitation. Maximum expectation should be maintained throughout the class period.

73. The role of volunteers should be negligible in your selection of the students who are to recite. A good audio-lingual presentation should do away with the volunteer; you know who can respond and whom you want to respond at a given moment. The time-honored procedure of asking a question and waiting for someone to raise his hand to answer does not fit in with intensive audio-lingual drills.

Student Errors

74. Your classroom procedure should be constructed to elicit only correct responses. Wrong responses result in negative learning and necessitate extra

time spent in re-learning. Frequent errors on the part of the student mean that something is wrong with what the instructor is doing: *it is your fault, not the student's.* You must re-evaluate at once your classroom procedure and lesson content.

75. Incorrect responses must be corrected at once. When a student misses a response or is unable to respond (wait no more than five seconds), it is your responsibility to get the correct response, either by calling on someone you know can respond or by giving the response yourself. Do not waste time going from one student to another looking for the correction: get to it immediately. Then proceed with remedial drills to reinforce the corrected response, first in chorus and then interspersing individual drills. Return now to the student who first missed and have him respond. If he misses again, call on a good student for a correct response, then go back immediately to the first student for repetition. If the student who misses is trying and wants to learn, he will not mind your persistence, and hopefully he will be better prepared the next time. During this drilling, the basic pattern is kept constant with variations of vocabulary and inflectional suffixes.

Drilling Procedure

76. Some kind of intensive drilling should occupy *at least* 80 per cent of each class period. Remember the students need practice speaking *in* the language and not *about* the language.

77. Classroom contact with the instructor is the period of optimum learning. Spend as much of this time as possible in meaningful drills and as little as necessary in testing what the students already know.

78. Effective learning requires that all of the students understand what they are expected to do in the drills. This will usually necessitate some kind of brief explanation in English, as well as some examples. To make sure the procedure is clear, begin the drill with *the same item* which was used as an example. Then either start right off with choral work or first call on a student who will be able to start the drill. Starting off with an individual drill permits the student to hear a correct individual response from one of his peers rather than his own

perhaps faulty response as part of the choral drill. Once the drill is begun, choral and individual work should be intermixed.

79. It is vital the student know what he is doing and saying while drilling. The instructor should occasionally check to make sure this is the case. Pattern drilling makes it possible for students to participate automatically without constantly keeping in mind the meaning of what they are practicing. As usual, call on a volunteer only as a last resort when soliciting a translation from the foreign language.

80. Drills must be intensive, which means several repetitions of each correct pattern. You should change the item or pattern when the performance indicates the pattern has been mastered or when the group shows signs of fatigue or boredom.

81. From the start your class should not be treated to gratuitous repetitions, but rather they should be trained to react quickly to what is said the first time. The instructor must control carefully everything he says and be firm in not repeating unnecessarily.

82. Effective practice can often be given to a pattern by drawing the students' attention during the drills to another part of the utterance. For example, in the Spanish sentence "Mejor que pidamos jugo" the verb form "pidamos" can be drilled intensively while substituting quickly such words as "café," "té," "leche" for "jugo." In German the words "Kaffee" and "Bier" can be substituted in the sentence "Bestellen wir Tee!" and in French the words "le professeur" and "l'équipe" in "Nous accueillons notre père."

83. Class drills should be as varied as possible. This can be accomplished by learning to expand the drills in the textbook. Ten to fifteen minutes should be sufficient time on a drill if it is kept moving; after twenty minutes, the students will begin to tire and their enthusiasm will wane.

84. Don't drill utterances which are impossible or improbable. The following sentence, for instance, was drilled once by an inexperienced Spanish instructor: "La ventana es traída por el mesero" ("The window is brought by the waiter"). It is surprisingly easy to do this during pattern drilling, especially when you are improvising items.

Drill Tempo

85. From the very beginning strive for instantaneous comprehension and quick-fire response. The students can be conditioned to whatever pace the instructor demands.

86. Your students should be on their toes, ready and anxious to do whatever you ask, during the entire period. Remember no matter how much time they work at home or in the language laboratory, the period they spend with you is their greatest learning opportunity.

87. The drill tempo should be so quick both the student and the instructor are noticeably exhausted or "worked over" by the end of the hour. In the case of the instructor, this exhaustion, while real, will often be accompanied by a feeling of exhilaration and satisfaction.

88. The degree to which an instructor is active in class is an index to his success as a teacher.

89. Drills must move fast enough to discourage the intellectual and labored sorting and assembling of lexical items. Keep in mind that the purpose of these drills is to develop automatic comprehension and response in the foreign language.

90. Keep individual drill exercises moving along by indicating who is to participate in quick-fire order. For many types of drills, this can be done by merely pointing to the second student a moment before the preceding one has finished his repetition. Of course, this does not work when the item being emphasized comes at the end of the utterance.

Drill Adaptations

91. Utterances which are too long do not work for intensive oral drill and must be shortened. Experience indicates from eight to ten syllables are best for effective drilling, and about twelve are maximum.

92. Since the drills found in many textbooks are inadequate and thus require expansion, adaptation, or omission, the instructor must consciously develop the skill to construct his own drills. At first this will mean a great deal of hard work for the teacher, particularly when preparing outside of class. Other textbooks can provide the teacher with valuable ideas for developing new materials.

93. Arrange your drills in such a way that there is a single-step change from one pattern to the next. The more changes or decisions the student has to make in going from one pattern to another, the greater difficulty he will have in drilling the pattern and the less efficient his learning experience will be.

Choral / Individual Drills

94. The entire class must participate actively in choral drills and will cooperate and work together as a unit if required to do so. It is amazing to what extent the teacher can condition the behavior and attitude of his class.

95. The advantage of choral drills is that they give the student time to acquire confidence in the patterns and the necessary proficiency to make an individual correct response. Because of peer-group pressure, most students want to perform well in individual drills.

96. The instructor's task is not merely to find the correct response to a given number of items, but to get every student to understand and perform with each item. This can be most effectively accomplished by a combination of choral and individual drills.

97. Class drills should be predominantly choral: this gives maximum active participation to each member of the class. Individual drills are valuable only to check on an individual's response and to break the hypnotic spell which prolonged choral drill can induce.

98. Difficult pattern drills – for example, those involving more than one change – should be done in chorus before they are done individually so the students can gain confidence. It must be remembered, however, for choral work to be effective and valuable each student must be performing correctly. The instructor must be sure that during these initial choral drills all of the class understands how the pattern functions. It is here that the teacher can utilize to advantage the better students in illustrative individual drills.

Gestures

99. Develop a hand gesture to indicate to the group that you want choral repetition. You will otherwise

grow weary of having to repeat such oral stimuli as (in Spanish) "todos," "repitan," "otra vez"; (in German) "alle zusammen," "noch einmal," "bitte wiederholen"; and (in French) "tous," "encore une fois," "répétez s'il vous plaît." This technique will also speed up the drills.

100. When doing intensive pattern drills, point to the student for individual response instead of calling on him by name. The students will readily accept what might seem a curt procedure, and the drilling will be much more effective.

Conversation

101. It is too much to expect your students to be able to carry on "free conversation" at the elementary or intermediate levels. To converse "freely" demands a greater command of the grammar and lexicon of the foreign language than the student at these levels can have. What an audio-lingual course must have, on the other hand, is controlled conversation.

102. As soon as your students have mastered the first lesson, they need and are ready for controlled conversation. To the student this will appear to be simply spontaneous, random chitchat built around personalized questions; in reality, however, such conversation is structured to re-combine grammatical points and lexical items into additional intensive drills.

103. Controlled conversation is valuable only if it achieves specific ends. To do so requires the teacher's detailed and careful preparation.

104. When your students are unable to respond to one of your questions, the probable reason is the question was inappropriate or too difficult and should not have been asked: either the class cannot answer the question with the language skills at their command, or else the answer you anticipated was not clear to the class from the wording of the question.

105. Do not ask questions which require that the students puzzle over what the answer should be: the relevant question is *how* to say it, not *what* to say. The hesitation of students can be justified only in terms of their uncertainty of the *form* of their response; if the issue is its content, you can suspect the question should not have been asked.

106. The students may come to consider controlled conversation as a bonus and thus enjoy it all the more. For the instructor, however, it should be an important part of the course integrated into the lesson plans from the very beginning.

Written Work

107. Instruct your students to give themselves practice periodically in writing out drills, dialogues, and parts of dialogues. The frequency with which this is done will depend upon the needs of the student and the orthography problems which the language presents. The responsibility to practice should be predominantly the student's.

108. There are good reasons for asking your students occasionally to write out drills before coming to class. You may collect these drills, check them over quickly, and return them the next day. If you are going to go over the same material in class, do so orally and do *not* let your students have their papers. If the exercise does not lend itself to this type of oral presentation, either adapt it or do not do the exercise in class. There is little real value in having the students read their written work aloud in class.

109. Students should no more be dependent upon their written work in class than upon the open textbook. The value of written exercises lies in the time and care the student has taken to do them and in the practice in spelling.

110. Read over carefully all exercises, especially translation exercises, you ask the students to write out for class. Frequently such exercises deviate from the patterns and vocabulary found in the preceding dialogue and drills and thereby force the student to say (or write) things he does not know how to say. When faced with this dilemma, the student naturally draws upon his experience in English and transfers his native habits onto the foreign language. There is no objection to translation drills if the patterns have been drilled sufficiently so that the English serves only as a cue to elicit the foreign language equivalent. Translation exercises which do not adhere to this important principle interfere greatly with the student's mastery of the target language and MUST be avoided.

Testing

111. A student who does poorly on major tests should be encouraged or invited to have a conference with his instructor, at which time his particular problems can be diagnosed and possible remedies suggested.

112. Going over corrected tests can be a valuable learning experience for the student but should play a limited role as a class exercise. When the entire group can profit from a review of a test, go over it by re-drilling the items which the class found most difficult. In tests of a more objective nature, do not take time to give the students the correct answers: if it was reasonable that they be able to respond correctly in the first place, it is equally reasonable that they be able to make corrections out of class once the errors have been pointed out. The emphasis for post-test exercises should be on re-drill.

113. Listening or comprehension tests must be an integral part of your testing program. This should be true for the short, unannounced quizzes as well as for the hour-long examinations. It is often possible to adapt the same types of exercises to your quizzes and tests that are used during the daily drill sessions.

114. Dictations are useful for testing whether the students have command of the orthography of the target language, but they are not useful for teaching them the orthography. This can be accomplished by practicing written exercises.

115. Whenever possible, prepare the listening part of the test on tape to be played in class or in the laboratory. This will give you better control over the test and will yield more reliable data.

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